August 15, 2017

Assemblymember Rob Bonta
State Capitol, Room 2204
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1479 (Bonta) – Public Records: Civil Penalties – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED

Dear Assembly Member Bonta:

On behalf of San Pedro Property Owners' Association representing over 800 property owners in the Los Angeles region, I am writing to express our opposition to Assembly Bill 1479, unless amended. The bill would place additional burdens on private non-profit organizations that adhere to the California Public Records Act ("CPRA"). We appreciate the amendments to the bill on July 11 in the Senate Judiciary Committee, but feel additional amendments are needed to protect non-profit, community-based organizations who remain vulnerable to abuse of the CPRA. Presently, the organization only has one full-time employee and one part-time employee and this would create a significant burden on our organization and similar organizations.

The CPRA already provides legal remedies to requestors who feel there have been obstacles. The responsibility of fulfilling these requests often falls on small teams that are stretched to their limits. Our members are required by law to respond to all CPRA requests but there must also be recognition of the significant burden these requests have, in particular serial abuse of the CPRA. On average, our members have an organizational budget under $1,200,000 with an average staff of less than two.

Creating a new incentive with a civil penalty provision would create a real economic incentive for those that abuse CPRA to seek not only the penalty, but to also seek attorney's fees and court costs. This provision poses a serious threat to the viability of our non-profit organizations.

Composed of Property Based Improvement Districts, Business Improvement Districts, and Community Benefit Districts, our core mission is to improve and enhance the environment and economy of San Pedro, CA, a suburb located in the southern most point of Los Angeles. Covering a wide range of services including maintenance, customer service, marketing, economic development, special events, and other enhanced services or improvements, we play a key role in San Pedro to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors. While we receive limited public funding, and work closely with city and county representatives, we do not hold the same land use authority, do not issue permits, nor do we oversee the core public safety

services provided by those public agencies. Our role is one of investment, promotion and revitalization within the urban core, and one primarily funded by private sources.

The San Pedro Property Owners' Alliance fully supports transparency within local government and the need to ensure safe, livable communities throughout our state. However, we believe it is critical to clarify that as it is written today, AB 1479 will unfairly impact private non-profit organizations.

On behalf of the San Pedro Property Owners' Alliance's stakeholders throughout San Pedro, we would ask AB 1479 be amended to restrict its application only to public (governmental) agencies. We look forward to continued conversations with you and your staff to help us address our concerns.

Sincerely,

Lorena Parker
Executive Director
San Pedro Property Owners' Alliance

Copy: Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell

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